enable them to enact suitable legislation for regulation and control of ground water development.

(iii) Circulation of Manual on artificial recharge of ground water to the States / Union Territories to enable them to formulate area specific artificial recharge schemes to check the declining trend in ground water levels.

(iv) Implementation of Pilot Central Sector Scheme on "Studies on Artificial Recharge of Ground Water" in the country at an estimated cost of Rs. 25.00 crore. Recharging wells and rain water harvesting are integral part of this scheme. The results of the scheme have been found to be very encouraging.

Under-Utilization of Kochi Airport

*211. SHRI R.P. GOEKNA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the huge infrastructural facilities and flight handling capacities created at a cost of Rs. 309 crores at the newly build private international airport at Kochi continue to be grossly underutilized causing heavy losses for the last three years;

(b) if so, the extent of losses suffered with reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that although a number of international carriers have expressed interest to operative from Kochi, their requests are being ignored to avoid competition for the national carriers, thereby sending wrong signals to other prospective investors; and

(d) the details thereof and action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) and (b) The ineternational airport at Cochin belongs to the State Government of Kerala and is a joint venture with the private sector. It is one of the two international airports in Kerala besides Thiruvananthapuram. International flights of Air India and Indian Airlines also operate out of Calicut. Therefore the infrastructural facilities etc. built at the Cochin airport was with the full knowledge of the parties concerned about operations of international flights from other airports in Kerala. The Government of India does not have any information in respect of losses suffered by the Cochin airport. The same is being obtained from State Government / Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL).

(c) Providing international connectivity from different airports is a matter of the Central Government and is decided during bilateral air services consultations at Government level based on reciprocity. The competing demands from other States are also kept in mind.

(d) Cochin has been granted as a point of call to Oman Air and Silk Air (Singapore). Apart from this Emirates Airline of Dubai has also been granted access to Cochin effective September, 2002. Therefore it will be incorrect to say that Cochin is being ignored while considering demands of foreign airlines for additional points of call. The requests of other airlines such as Yemen Airways, Qatar Airways, Saudia, Gulf Air, Sri Lankan Airlines, Uzbekistan Airways will be discussed during bilateral discussions with their respective Governments as and when held.

Drop in business of Indian Airlines

*212. SHRI B. J. PANDA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of drop in number of passengers, number of flights, number of employees and total revenue in Indian Airlines during the first six months of 2001-02 as compared to previous year; and

(b) the action Government are planning to take to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) There has been no drop in passenger carriage, flights operated and revenue earned by Indian Airlines including Alliance Air, its wholly owned subsidiary in the first six months of the current financial year as compared to the corresponding months of the previous year. The details are as under:—

	(April—Sept., 2000)	(April—Sept., 2001)
No. of passengers Carried (in lakhs)	35.75	36.67
Flights Operated	46812	47885
Total revenue earned (Rs. in crores)	2042.93	2173.98

The number of employees in Indian Airlines including SHOD and Alliance Air has, come down from 21453 at the end of September, 2000 to 21016 at the end of September, 2001.

(b) Indian Airlines has taken / propose to take the following steps to further improve its performance:—